(b) and (c) Measures contemplated to control the growth of population include incentives for sterilisation; education for promotion of spacing; enhancing community participation by setting up of population committees at State, District and Block levels; providing assistance to grass-root level voluntary organisations through Standing Committee on Voluntary Action; adopting improved communication approaches improving programme management and supervision by strengthening existing staffing pattern for direction and administration; improving quality of services by undertaking technical training programmes for medical and para-medical workers; providing recanalisation services; enhancing child survival rates through Universal Immunisation Programme etc.

Antarctica Missions

477. PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spent on Antarctica Missions during the last five years; and

(b) what are the details of the major thrusts and scientific advancement arising due to these Antarctica Missions and what R&D use have the findings of these missions put to?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) The expenditure incurred by the Department of Ocean Development during the last five years are as follows:

(Rs. crores)

3rd Expedition	— 1983-84	5.70
4th Expedition	— 1984-85	6.20
5th Expedition	— 1985-86	5.75
6th Expedition	— 1986-87	5.12
7th Expedition	— 1987-88	6.20

(b) The scientific missions to Antarctica have generated a wealth of knowledge and information about the icy continent in various disciplines of science such as geology, geophysics, meteorology, biology, oceanography, geomagnetism, atmospheric physics, etc. These expeditions have been responsible for the development of infrastructure and living and working facilities in the continent. More than 200 scientific papers in national and international journals have been published enabling India to have a highly respected position among the community of nations engaged in polar research. The knowledge gained by our scientists about this continent and its resources enabled India to participate effectively in the finalisation of the negotiations on the Antarctica Minerals Regime adopted on 2nd June, 1988 in New Zealand. This Convention will regulate the exploitation of mineral resources in Antarctica at a later date and the countries which have continued presence in Antarctica stand to benefit.

Control of Birth Rate

478. PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the birth rate has been stationary during the last five years inspite of the family welfare programmes;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps are being taken to bring down the birth rate in view of the explosive situation developing in the country with fast increasing population growth?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI MOTI LAL VORA): (a) and (b) Annual estimates of birth rate are available from Sample Registration System of Registrar General, India. According to the latest estimates available, the Birth Rate for the year 1987 is 32.0 (provisional) per thousand population and it shows a steady decline from the Birth rate level of 33.7 for the year 1983.

(c) To bring down the birth rate, the Family Welfare Programme has a well defined strategy which is constantly reviewed. This strategy emphasises an optimal use of infrastructure created; involvement of voluntary organisations; improving quality of services, enhancing child survival; strengthening of information, education and communication; promotion of temporary contraceptive methods, incentives for terminal mehhods etc.

R & D Work in Scientific Establishment

479. PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that the inputs into R&D effort in the scientific establishments have been going down during the last five years;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the inadequate inputs into R&D effort in scientific establishments has adversely affected the industrial development in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) to (c) No, Sir.

There has been a steady increase in the allocations for science and technology in the successive five year plans. The allocations (plan and non-plan) have increased from Rs. 20 crores in the First Plan to Rs. 3716 crores in the Sixth Plan and to over Rs. 7500 crores in the Seventh Plan. Over the years, the Government has created a industrial infrastructure for the scienfic and industrial R&D.

In addition, the Government has also encouraged in in-house R&D in industry through incentives and awards.

Irrigation Project of A. P.

480. PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the stage with regard to pending irrigation and Hydel Projects in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) what are the reasons for the inordinate delay in the sanction of these projects; and

(c) by when do Government propose to clear these pending projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI) : (a) 12 major and medium irrigation projects and 2 hydro electric projects from Andhra Pradesh are pending for clearance.

(b) and (c) Delay is for want of either environmental or forest clearance, inter-State issues or non receipt of replies from the State Governments on observations of Central appraising agencies.

Vacancies of Judges in Various High Courts

481. PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of vacancies of judges in different High Courts during the last three years;

(b) the number of vacancies that have been filled up during the last three years;

(c) what are the reasons for the delay in filling up of these vacancies; and

(d) whether it is a fact that some justices of Supreme Court felt that the delay in filling up the vacancies had led to the denial of justice to deserving cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI HANS RAJ BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) The requisite information is given in the attached annexure [*See* Appendix CXLVIII, Annexure No 25]